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ABSTRACT

This packet contains four pamphlets that are part of a campaign to encourage adults to provide and promote positive activities for youth and to serve as role models for young people. "Positive Activities: A Campaign for Youth" includes information on what positive activities are, how to get involved in helping to provide positive activities for youth, mentoring, and resources available from the Positive Activities Campaign. "Your Time, Their Future: Positive Activities to Promote a More Productive Workforce" suggests roles for national and local companies and ways to make company resources more available for youth programs. "Your Time Their Future: Membership-based Groups Provide Positive Activities" describes the role of clubs, lodges, and civic organizations and partner with youth organizations. "Get Involved in Someone's Future: A Guide to Volunteering with Young People" includes suggestions for ways adults can volunteer and examples of successful volunteer programs. (KC)

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Positive Activities Campaign

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

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Positive Activities



A Campaign
For Youth



**"...You and I know that millions
of our are being left
behind in lives of too much
danger, too many drugs, too
little and
not enough opportunity.**

**"...You and I know that a lot
of the problems facing our chil-
dren are problems of the human
heart—problems that can only
be resolved when there is a one-
on-one connection, community
by , neighbor-
hood by neighborhood, street by
street, home by home."**

*President Bill Clinton
April 25, 1997
Presidents' Summit for America's Future*

Making a World of Difference

A world apart. Changes over the years in family structures and neighborhood networks have increased the amount of time that many young people spend unsupervised. Today's youth are growing up faster than ever. At school, at home, in front of televisions and in their neighborhoods, adolescents are facing pressures and risks never before imagined. And in ever-increasing numbers, they are facing them alone. At the same time, these children often confront mixed messages from the media and pressure from some of their peers to use alcohol, cigarettes, and illicit drugs at younger and younger ages.

"The Presidents' Summit for America's Future was an unqualified success... We touched the hearts and fired the imaginations of Americans everywhere... Now we need to keep the momentum going."

General Colin Powell

When fun, challenging, and structured activities—positive activities—are in place, however, young people have somewhere to go and something to do. Adult volunteers and positive-minded peers show them constructive and healthy ways to enjoy their free time. They learn self-confidence and skills that last a lifetime, and studies show they are much less likely to use drugs or alcohol.

"When young people can see lives of opportunity and hope ahead of them, they are more likely to make the right choices."

*Donna E. Shalala
Secretary of Health and
Human Services*

A world of difference.

Early adolescence is the most vulnerable age for youth to begin substance abuse and related high-risk behaviors. It is also the perfect time to get involved—the perfect time to make a world of difference.

This guide is an introduction to the Positive Activities Campaign and will provide readers with information and resources on ways to get involved in helping young people.

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A Campaign for Youth

Positive Activities Campaign. It is a simple but proven fact—most young people do not use drugs when

they have something positive to

do, and when adults who care are involved in their lives.

That is why the Secretary of Health and Human Services launched the Positive Activities Campaign: to encourage adults to get involved in the lives of youth, and to steer young people into structured, healthy activities.

"Although there is no substitute for a deeply caring parent, young people can still thrive if some responsible person or group steps in to meet their needs."

Great Transitions: Preparing Adolescents for a New Century; Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1996.

The campaign is part of

ongoing efforts to support the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, which declared the need for more caring adults in the lives of our Nation's young people. Adults who get involved with youth in positive activities will help strengthen young people's resolve to avoid alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs. Caring adults help youth build skills and develop self-discipline, as well as learn constructive ways to spend their leisure time.

OUTWARD BOUND

Adolescents ages 14 and up flock to Outward Bound's safe, adventure-based programs, ranging from wilderness trips to in-school demonstrations to rock and mountain climbing. Outward Bound offers courses and demonstration projects across the country in five wilderness schools, two urban centers, and Expeditionary Learning school programs in 11 States. Participants learn self-esteem, self-reliance, and concern for others and for the environment, all while accomplishing tasks they once thought impossible.

YOUR TIME—THEIR FUTURE

Can a caring adult's time really make a difference in the life of a young person? Research demonstrates that the involvement of a reliable adult clearly does help youth develop life skills, build self-confidence, and resist pressure to begin using drugs. A recent study showed that when Big Brothers and Big Sisters met with their Little Brothers and Little Sisters regularly for at least a year, the youth were:

46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs.

27% less likely to begin using alcohol.

52% less likely to skip school.

More confident of their performance in school work.

Less likely to hit someone.

More likely to get along with their families.

Many other studies consistently report the important role concerned adults can play in helping young people fulfill their potential. Beyond drug prevention, these relationships have been shown to provide young people with:

Positive perceptions of their options in life.

Better chances for future stable employment.

Improved academic performance, often leading to college.

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Positive Activities

Why promote positive activities? The answer is easy: **because they work.**

Both research and the lessons from the past show that prevention activities with only a single focus do not work for most adolescents. Positive activities are effective because they do more than prevent drug abuse; they offer a fun and challenging array of activities depending on the interests of the young person. In addition to helping keep youth out of trouble, positive activities:

- Help young people develop problem-solving and decision-making skills.
- Build confidence.
- Provide a sense of belonging.
- Promote healthy relationships with peers and caring adults.

These skills and strengths are especially crucial in the years of early adolescence, a time when young people are beginning to explore and develop their interests, friendships, and identities—and when youth are most likely to be invited to use drugs.

WHAT ARE POSITIVE ACTIVITIES?

Positive activities provide fun, interesting, and constructive ways for young people to spend their free time with adults and friends, especially during non-school hours such as vacations, summer months, and after school. Ongoing interaction between a caring, responsible adult and child can help young people build supports that last a lifetime, such as:

Camp counselors leading educational nature expeditions.

Parents making time for a daily walk or bike ride with their child.

Volunteers coaching girls' soccer teams.

Neighborhood elders holding storytelling sessions in the community.

Volunteers mentoring a young person: helping youth discover strengths they already have.

What Makes Positive Activities "Positive?"

While positive activities can be many things, several key criteria can be found in programs that help youth learn to stay safe and healthy. These activities work best when they:

- Form and strengthen relationships with parents, family, caring adults, and positive-minded friends.
- Are challenging, enjoyable, and fun.
- Have youth input on activity design and decisions.
- Contain structure, meaning, and interaction (not activity for the sake of activity).
- Promote cultural awareness, especially in ethnic communities.
- Help develop skills and competencies.
- Provide service to the community.

Get Involved...Get Connected

Positive activities are already taking place throughout the country with the help of national organizations, local programs, and individual one-on-one involvement. Community by community, all kinds of adult volunteers—parents, grandparents, teachers, counselors, business people, and others—are drawing on their interests and getting involved. Listed below are just a few starting points.

- **Playing Hard:** Sports and recreation activities, from soccer games and other sports to chess strategy and nature trails.
- **Making Connections:** Cultural awareness activities, from storytelling sessions to ethnic plays and dancing.

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Strictly Business: Entrepreneurship activities, from in-school projects to workplace shadowing or mentoring and educational investment ventures.

Doing the Right Thing: Community service activities, from meals-to-elders projects to tutoring and canned food drives.*

Joining the Group: Youth and spiritual group participation, from scouting troops to youth fellowship retreats and 4-H fairs.

Getting into the Act: Arts and humanities activities, from museum tours to storytelling and choral groups.

After-Hours Options: Alternative event activities, from post-prom parties to evening sports.

Going Green: Environmental action activities, from planting abandoned-lot gardens to cleaning up streams and cleaning off graffiti.

Neighborly Concerns: Community drop-in center participation, from fun drug-free zones to information resources and conflict resolution.

Getting Personal: Mentoring program participation, from e-mail mentoring to lunch-hour visiting and trips to the ballpark.

THE "CONTINUUM OF VOLUNTEERISM"

Volunteering in positive activities can be a short-term commitment, a long-term commitment, or somewhere in between. Based on the focus of the activity and a volunteer's schedule, participation in structured skill- and confidence-building activities for young people can range anywhere from a few hours a week to a daily commitment lasting years.

While the most intensive and long-term activities—such as mentoring, which can last a year or more—are most effective in steering youth toward a successful and drug-free future, any amount of time invested along this continuum of involvement has important, positive, and long-lasting impacts for young people.

A Very Positive Activity: Mentoring

What is a mentor? A mentor is a responsible adult or older youth who provides young people with support, advice, friendship, reinforcement, and constructive examples, to support the efforts of parents. Mentors are people who care, people who listen, people who want to help youth bring out the strengths that they already have.

Structured mentoring programs usually pair men and women volunteers with young people in one-on-one settings or in teams, where the relationships can last anywhere from a few months to a year to many years. Other mentoring programs pair youth volunteers with their peers or with younger children. Training for young mentors is usually provided in these types of programs.

Mentoring works. Time and again, mentoring programs have been shown to provide youth with an increased sense of belonging and security; enhanced communication skills; and improved performance at home, in school, and in the community. In an area of one Illinois city, for example, one out of two students drops out of high school every year. For those who had mentors from a local program, however, the dropout rate fell to one out of twenty.

Children actively seek mentoring. Asked what they wanted in their free time, most youth told a Carnegie Corporation task force they sought "long talks with trusting and trustworthy adults who know a lot about the world and who like young people."

Common Questions About Positive Activities

Why should adults get involved?

Young people need positive, successful adult role models who will help them set and achieve their goals and stay away from drugs.

Do positive activities really work?

Yes. When young people are involved in structured, interesting programs during non-school hours, they are less likely to start drinking or doing drugs, less likely to skip school, and far more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college.

How much time do adults need to give?

That depends on their available time, their schedule, and how they plan to volunteer. Maybe they will read to 8-year-olds for one lunch hour a week; maybe they will coach a little league team three nights a week.

How will youth benefit?

They will have someone to look up to, a place to go in their free time, something fun to do that will keep them away from destructive influences. And they will have what too many youth lack today—the encouragement and guidance that can only come from a caring adult.

How will adults benefit?

They will have the satisfaction of helping a child succeed, the pleasure of sharing their own interests, and the chance to teach the next generation—and to learn from them.

Your Time Their Future

Positive Activities
Promote A Productive
Workforce



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"Although there is no substitute
for deeply caring
one, and that one can still
thrive if some responsible
person or group steps in to
meet the **needs**

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Your Future Workforce

Your best employees are those who enter your workplace prepared with appropriate education and work experience combined with healthy social and coping skills.

For most employees, the foundation for those valuable life skills began when, as children, they had positive interactions with peers, parents, other caretakers, and a variety of adults in the community.

In the same way, many of your good employees learned to adapt to changing expectations while they were growing up with the support of family and friends in their neighborhoods. The caring and the competencies learned in those early interactions can—and do—affect current employee behaviors, morale, productivity, and excellence.

The Nation's employers currently are losing an estimated \$11.4 BILLION in productivity and health care costs due to illicit drug use. In the future, finding workers who are dependable and competent may become even more



difficult: Nearly 25 percent teenagers in grades 9–12 report regular alcohol use, and 16 percent (almost one in every six teenagers) report regular use of marijuana. The increase in use of alcohol and drugs along with the decrease in age of first use indicate a decrease in youth's perception of risk in using alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs. Recent research shows that engaging youth in positive activities can have a critical impact on substance abuse prevention, and, thus, on the economic structure of your company

and our Nation.

WORKFORCE

A World of Difference

Early adolescence is the most vulnerable age for youth to begin substance abuse and related high-risk behaviors. It is also the perfect time for caring adults to get involved—the perfect time to make a world of difference.

PRODUCTIVITY

What Can You Do?

Get Involved. You can help your future workforce become more dependable and more prepared by participating in the Positive Activities Campaign, a program to help our youth stay drug free.

This program seeks your support for adult-youth involvement and mentoring as a means to help protect youth from negative influences, including drugs. This campaign also is part of ongoing efforts to support the goals of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future: to mentor, protect, nurture, teach, and serve the youth of our Nation.

"We believe that personal **involvement** of this type is the best possible long-term investment. Our employee mentors and their students benefit immediately from their **relationship**. The company benefits by marshaling the **talent** at an earlier age with the hope that in the future these students will be **productive participants** in the labor force.

Donald B. Marron,
Chairman and CEO,
PaineWebber Group, Inc.

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A growing number of American companies have quality community outreach programs and contribute significant dollars to solving critical problems. However, despite current voluntary efforts, only a small fraction of all of our Nation's at-risk youth are receiving the benefits of a formal relationship with a mentor.

Positive Activities. To help more young people, we must increase the availability of positive activities—structured activities that are fun and challenging, and that can help prevent youth from engaging in substance abuse. And companies and their employees who connect youth to positive activities do more than keep youth off drugs; they also give young people a taste of the world of work and its expectations. Learning with adult mentors and guides, youth gain a greater sense of self and their potential for making a difference.

**Positive
Activities**

How Can Businesses Make A Difference for Youth?

Increasing Your Impact.

Following are some suggestions and strategies for getting involved in the lives of young people. Check off what you already have in place and consider what you can add to reach additional youth.

"The problems of adolescence deal with deep and moving human experiences....The tortuous passage from childhood to adulthood requires our highest **attention**, our **understanding**, and a new level of thoughtful **commitment**."

*David A. Hamburg,
President, Carnegie Corporation
of New York*

NATIONAL COMPANY

Create commitment and opportunities for increased outreach to youth among employees, vendors, shareholders, retirees, and customers.

Develop communication and recognition.

- Communicate the need for youth programs in relation to your business and strategic goals, such as building goodwill and strengthening a new generation of workers.
- Use a corporate-wide communication strategy to showcase positive

activities in your newsletter, employee communications, and payroll inserts.

- Publicize the needs of youth, such as numbers of youth on mentor waiting lists. Use the resources listed at the end of this guide for more information.
- Recognize how employees, shareholders, vendors, retirees, and parents are already helping youth in newsletters, staff meetings,

Make a Difference as a National Company:
Create **commitment** and opportunity for increased outreach to youth.

Make a Difference as a Local Community Leader: Create a visible presence to youth in your neighborhood.

annual award dinners, and company picnics.

- Encourage branches, subsidiaries, or franchisees to partner with nearby schools and community-based agencies to determine and meet the most pressing youth needs.
- Recognize branch/plant managers or franchise owners for their efforts in increasing positive activities for youth.
- Develop educational and promotional materials for local events that rally members and can be shared with youth, such as tip sheets, posters, T-shirts, water bottles, etc.

Foster professional and personal development.

- Encourage employees to identify the youth-development issues they are concerned about in their own families and neighborhoods, and provide resources to help address them. You may find that more positive activities for youth will go a long way toward helping the parents and caregivers you employ.
- Encourage employees to get involved in youth-related activities.

- Track the benefits of employee involvement with youth, such as reduced absenteeism among employees, increased productivity among those who volunteer over those who don't, and increased sales from the goodwill built via positive activities efforts.
- Benefit from increased creativity, trust, time management skills, flexibility, motivation, accountability, and access to potential new customers.
- Provide employees access to workshops or speakers on parenting skills and youth-development issues.

Be a national role model.

- Create a national program for company-based mentoring, internship, or shadowing at the workplace.
- Develop a company policy that provides released time for employees mentoring or coaching in the community.
- Challenge your vendors, partners, and competitors to match your contributions to positive youth activities in the community.

mentoring

success

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awareness

Electronic Data Systems

involvement

Education Outreach Program

excellence

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LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADER

Create a visible presence to youth in your neighborhood.

As a company—or as a branch, subsidiary, or franchise of a national corporation—you can have the most effective presence with youth in your community by considering several options for positive activities, such as the examples on the following pages.

Form and strengthen relationships between youth and parents, family, caring adults, and positive peer influences.

- Work with community organizations to determine and target activities to young people's most pressing needs.
- Adopt a school to provide resources, volunteers, and technical expertise to youth in your neighborhood.
- Create a company-sponsored program to recruit employees and their families to coach, tutor, mentor, etc. (See resources at end.)

- Encourage employees to recruit volunteers from their faith communities or other organizations to be partners in positive activities sponsored by your group.
- Develop an entrepreneurial program. For example, start an educational investment club.

Develop and enhance the social and life skills of youth and families.

- Offer parenting workshops to your employees.
- Engage your human resources staff to coordinate training with

Research findings show that when mentors meet with a young person at least three times a month for at least a year, those youth—compared to their peers—were:

- ♦ 46 percent less likely to begin using illegal drugs.
- ♦ 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol.
- ♦ 53 percent less likely to skip school.
- ♦ 37 percent less likely to skip class.
- ♦ More confident of their performance in school work.
- ♦ Less likely to hit someone.
- ♦ More likely to get along with their families.

youth agencies that can offer your employees training on how to coach and mentor youth.

Have youth contribute to program design and decisions.

- Invite youth to help plan your organization's community outreach events that highlight positive substance abuse prevention activities, such as bike-a-thons, festivals, races, youth-attended picnics, concerts, etc.
- Create a youth and young adult advisory group to help with ongoing positive activities, using the company's policy for youth involvement as a guide.
- Recognize the leadership and service contributions of your employees' children. Offer incentives for positive service activities to their peers and the community, such as awards or scholarships.

Provide structure, meaning, and interaction (not activity for the sake of activity).

- Partner with trade-related or professional groups to sponsor a career fair for youth in your community. Introduce youth to a variety of trades and professions, and offer follow-up employee shadowing and mentoring.
- Help youth research the history of your type of business, the background requirements of employees, and your company's impact on the community.

Help youth take pride in their own—and our Nation's—heritage by learning and celebrating their cultural traditions.

- Work with experts to provide cultural sensitivity and history training to your employees who are potential volunteers to youth of diverse backgrounds.
- Host a "Heritage Festival" for youth and their families to present history stories, music, and folk tales that celebrate their heritage.

initiative

support

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- Mentor a youth in researching his or her genealogy. Encourage young people to identify the customs, ceremonies, music, and native crafts of their cultures.

Provide youth the opportunity to give back to the community.

- Host an employee Family Volunteer-a-thon in

- Encourage youth service activity through clean-up competitions, or similar programs.

Ensure that all activities are challenging, enjoyable, and fun.

- Create activities that involve outdoor adventure, problem-solving skills, teamwork, and intellectual



sponsorship with local community agencies or during National Service Day. Have families pledge hours of service in youth-oriented agencies.

challenges to keep youth engaged and active. Call 1-800-729-6686 (TDD: 1-800-487-4889) and ask for Positive Activities Campaign resources for more ideas.

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, a service of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, offers a toll-free hotline for anyone interested in volunteering and mentoring. If you want phone numbers of local organizations, suggestions for activities you can share with youth, resource guides for volunteering programs, or advice on how to get involved, please don't hesitate to call **1-800-729-6686—se habla español.**

TDD 1-800-487-4889

<http://www.health.org>

Resource Organizations:

The Points of Light Foundation

National Headquarters

1737 H Street N.W.

Washington, DC 20006

202-223-9186

National Association of Partners in Education

901 North Pitt Street

Suite 320

Alexandria, VA 22314

703-836-4880

The National Mentoring Partnership

2801 M Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20007

202-338-3844

Further Resource Materials:

A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in Nonschool Hours.

Carnegie Corporation of New York. \$13.00. Phone

202-429-7979.

Developing a Corporate Volunteer Program—Guidelines for Success. The Points of Light Foundation. Order #106; \$25.00 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling. Catalog Services, P.O. Box 79110, Baltimore, MD 21279-0110. Phone 800-272-8306.

Mentoring: An Overview of Workplace Programs. The National Mentoring Partnership. Free. 2801 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20007. Phone 202-336-3844.

Organizing Effective School-based Mentoring Programs. National Association of Partners in Education. \$35.00 plus \$7.50 for shipping and handling. 901 North Pitt Street, Suite 320, Alexandria, VA 22314. Phone 703-836-4880; fax 703-836-6941.

Great Ideas! Award-Winning Strategic Community Relations Programs. Joe Williams Communications, Inc. \$89.00 (Oklahoma residents add 8% sales tax). 300 S.E. Fourth Street, P.O. Box 924, Bartlesville, OK 74005. Phone 800-833-5946; fax 918-336-2733.

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Your Time Their Future



Membership-Based
Groups Provide
Positive Activities



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A Tradition of Caring

Tradition, Belonging, and a Sense of Purpose.

These qualities link your lodge, branch, post, club, or chapter to a variety of membership-based groups who are active in neighborhoods nationwide. While each organization like yours takes pride in its own character and identity, each also provides a place for individuals to:

- Support a common vision.
- Work in teams to give back to the community.
- Socialize.
- Learn from peers.

Your organization is a rich source of responsible adults whose life experiences, commitment, and sound values would benefit any young person. With its unique strengths and resources, the potential benefit of your group, and others like it, is tremendous.

Membership groups' youth activities usually involve sponsorship of local youth programs, sports teams, scholarships, or one-day events. Trends indicate that while these activities are helpful and appreciated, society's most vulnerable youth still do not have access to these opportunities. In fact, many popular existing activities do not reach youth in need or provide the one-to-one adult interaction proven to be most effective.

**"Although there is no substitute
for a deeply caring par-
ent, young people can still
thrive if some responsible
person or group steps in to
meet their needs."**

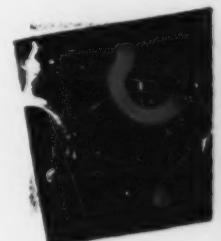
Great Transitions: Preparing Adolescents for a New Century,
Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1996.

Your Time—Their Future

Get Involved. The Secretary of Health and Human Services invites your leadership as an active participant in the Positive Activities Campaign, a program to help our youth stay drug-free by keeping them involved in activities that build skills, confidence, and competence.

This campaign reinforces the concepts of volunteerism, mentoring, and adult-youth involvement to help protect youth from negative influences, including drugs. This campaign is part of ongoing efforts to support the goals of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future: to mentor, protect, nurture, teach, and serve the youth of our Nation.

A Natural Transition. Helping youth in these ways is a natural outgrowth of the activities already available to your membership. You already have the human resources, communication networks, training capacity, and commitment to community necessary to serve youth. And collectively, membership organizations have access to millions of members—an impressive asset to substantially increase positive activities available to youth.



YOUR TIME—YOUR FUTURE

Providing positive activities for youth may also help your organization face a challenge that is becoming common to many membership groups. Despite a typically strong membership of those age 50 and over, your organization may not be well-known to many people under 35. As a result, some organizations are facing prospective shrinking membership pools. One way to reverse this trend is to **connect** adult members to the youth and families within your communities.

Opportunities for Youth

By sharing your perspective, proud traditions, and skills with today's youth, you and your organization have a unique opportunity to provide millions of youth with the growth opportunities they need and are waiting for: the opportunities of a lifetime.

A World of Difference. Society has been experiencing significant changes in family structure for many years. In many homes, both parents are working, or there is only one parent, or children are being raised by relatives or foster parents. Frequently, more children's free time is spent unsupervised and unstructured. In some areas, traditional community and neighborhood networks are also eroding,

deepening children's social isolation.

The problems of adolescence deal with deep and moving human experiences....The tortuous passage from childhood to adulthood requires our highest attention, our understanding, and a new level of thoughtful commitment.

*David A. Hamburg,
President, Carnegie
Corporation of New York*

At the same time, children are confronting pressures from both peers and the media to use alcohol, cigarettes, and illicit drugs at younger and younger ages. And early adolescence is the most vulnerable age for youth to begin drug use and related high-risk behaviors. It is also the perfect time to get involved—the perfect time for caring adults to make a world of difference.

Reaching Youth as a National Network: Build local group support for pro-active involvement in positive activities for youth.

Reaching Youth as a Community Partner: Work with schools and youth-serving agencies to increase young people's access to positive activities.



POSITIVE ACTIVITIES

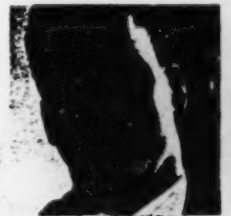
For children and adolescents, positive activities provide a safe haven in a complex world. They provide fun, interesting, challenging, and **constructive** ways for young people to spend their free time with adults and friends, especially during non-school hours, such as summer months and after school. Positive activities can be many things, including any interaction with a responsible and **caring** adult that develops life skills, self-discipline, confidence, and a healthy outlook.

In the prevention, education, and health services fields, positive activities are recognized as an **effective strategy** for preventing substance abuse and other high-risk behaviors in youth.

How To Reach More Young People

Increase Your Impact. Youth-related work is already happening in many types of local groups. Following are some ideas for how your organization can significantly increase the positive activities for youth available at national, local, and individual levels. Check off what you already have in place, and consider what can you add to reach more youth.

Reaching Youth as an Individual Member: Mentor a child, lead a group, coach a team, or be a volunteer coordinator to connect youth with caring adults.



NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Build chapter support for pro-active involvement in positive activities for youth.

Develop communication and recognition.

- Use your newsletter and web site to educate local groups and members on the need for positive activities, such as numbers of youth on mentor waiting lists. Use the resources listed at the end of this guide for more information.
- Encourage local groups to develop proactive service opportunities that promote one-on-one connections between youth and adults.
- Recognize the positive activity involvement of branch units or local teams and of individual members and their families, in publications and at conferences, annual meetings, picnics, etc.
- Encourage local groups to designate ongoing times for members to tutor, mentor, or coach in their neighborhoods.
- Develop educational and promotional materials for local group events that rally members and can be shared with youth, such as youth membership cards, tip sheets, posters, T-shirts, water bottles, etc.

Increase member support and foster development.

- Provide ideas for members to organize internship/shadowing opportunities for youth within particular skill areas, such as woodworkers, model railroaders,

The National Exchange Clubs recognize graduating high school seniors who have dramatically changed their **attitude** and **performance** during their high school years. Many honorees have overcome great physical, emotional, or social obstacles. These "Accepting the Challenge of Excellence" Awards often recognize youth who have been overlooked for their accomplishments.

journalists, engineers, and other hobby, trade, or professional groups.

- Recognize the leadership and service contributions of your members' children through contests and scholarship incentives for positive service activities performed for their peers and the community.
- Provide access to workshops and speakers on parenting skills and youth development issues for members.

Be a national role model.

- Challenge "like" organizations to match your contributions to positive youth activities in the community.
- Set national benchmarks and commit to track the numbers of members involved in providing positive activities to youth nationwide.
- Sponsor a national program for replication among local groups.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Work with schools and service-providing agencies to increase youth access to positive activities.

As a local membership-based group, you can have the most effective presence to youth in your community by considering several options for positive activities, such as the examples on the following pages.

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has encouraged each of its 2,217 Lodge communities to mentor a minimum of ten at-risk youth. As a part of its commitment to the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, the Elks also will work with schools to sponsor **drug-free** proms and graduation parties in 2,000 communities, building on the model Elks Drug Awareness program currently active in 300 Lodges.

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Links, Inc. developed **Project Lead** (Links Erase Alcohol and Drug Abuse) to help African-American youth refrain from using alcohol or drugs or engaging in other high-risk behaviors. Local Links chapters build a project team with youth service agencies, churches, other fraternal organizations, civic groups, business, and media. Project Lead volunteers and resource persons are trained to work with youth on a weekly basis.

Form and strengthen relationships between youth and parents, family, caring adults, and positive peer influences.

- ♦ Adopt a school to provide resources, volunteers, and technical expertise to youth in your neighborhood.
- ♦ Create a branch-sponsored mentoring program to recruit members and their families to coach, tutor, mentor, etc. See *Mentoring: Elements of Effective Practice*, and *The Mentor Training Curriculum*, both available from The National Mentoring Partnership.
- ♦ Work with agencies to develop creative member activity efforts that target youth on program or agency waiting lists.
- ♦ Encourage members to invite volunteers from their faith communities or other

organizations to be partners in the positive activities sponsored by your group.

Develop and enhance social and life skills of youth and families.

- ♦ Sponsor member family discussion nights where parents and teenagers can discuss important topics.
- ♦ Offer parenting workshops to your members.
- ♦ Coordinate training sessions with youth agencies that will offer your members training in how to coach and mentor youth.

**Have youth contribute to
program design and decisions.**

- Create and/or connect with a youth group counterpart to re-energize service partnerships among adult and youth members, such as the Kiwanis and high school Key Clubs or The National Exchange Club and Excel Clubs.
- Invite youth to help plan your organization's community outreach events that highlight positive and substance abuse prevention activities, such as bike-a-thons, festivals, races, youth attended picnics, or concerts.



- Create a youth and young adult advisory group to work with ongoing positive activities and to help your organization strategize for member recruitment.



**Provide structure, meaning, and
interaction (not activity for the
sake of activity).**

- Partner with other trade-related or professional groups to sponsor a career fair for youth in your community, introducing youth to a variety of trades or professions, such as the Hispanic Society of Engineers and Scientists, Woodworkers of America, Masons, or the Association of Black Journalists.

American Legion posts will establish **Safe Kids Communities** to keep youth active and instill in them a sense of **pride** in their community, State and Nation. Programs will include safety awareness, mentoring, child identification, and outdoor recreation activities—all as part of their **commitment** to the Presidents' Summit for America's Future.

- Host "Tech Camp" days that offer a hands-on introduction to your group's hobby, trade, or profession—and a way to match mentors with youth.

Help youth take pride in their own and our Nation's heritage by learning and celebrating cultural traditions.

- Work with experts to provide cultural sensitivity and history training to your members who are potential volunteers to youth of diverse backgrounds.
- Host a "Heritage Festival" for youth to present history stories, music, and folk tales that celebrate their heritage. Members can work with youth to develop skits or talent nights, or to assist with essay or poetry readings.
- Help youth research the history of your group and its famous members, to share the group's mission and reasons for organizing.
- Mentor a youth in researching his or her genealogy. Encourage youth to identify the customs, ceremonies, music, and native crafts of their cultures.

Provide youth the opportunity to give back to the community.

- Host a member Family Volunteer-a-thon in sponsorship with local community agencies. Have families pledge hours of service in youth-oriented agencies.
- Encourage general youth service activity through talent shows for nursing homes, or clean-up competitions.

Ensure that all activities are challenging, enjoyable, and fun.

- Create activities that involve outdoor adventure, teamwork, communication skills, and intellectual challenges to keep youth engaged and active. Call 1-800-729-6686 (TDD: 1-800-487-4899) and ask for Positive Activities Campaign resources for more ideas.

2. Convey a Sense of Urgency and Ownership.

- Create a specific leadership position or team to head a positive activities campaign in your local group. Obtain a local group chairperson or branch president commitment.
- Invite your members, their families, and youth to contribute to creative solutions for reaching more youth.
- Tie the benefits of youth outreach to your organization's goals and to members' interests.
- Educate members and engage them in developing new approaches to reach your community's most vulnerable youth. Target pre-school through junior-high age children with direct activities.
 - Commit adequate resources to accomplish your goals.
 - Provide training and support to members working with young people. Be up-front in acknowledging the concern and apprehension that older members may have in working with youth. Create group or team activities to minimize concerns.
- Define success. Decide how you will benchmark and evaluate results.
- Recognize and publicize member and youth efforts.

3. Use Existing Resources.

- Access resources from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, a service of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, at 1-800-729-6686 (TDD: 1-800-487-4889) or their web site at <http://www.health.org>.
- Partner with the experts of successful youth and mentoring models. See the *Positive Activities Resource Guide* for agencies in your community.

- Rely on your local Volunteer Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters agency, or The National Mentoring Partnership affiliate to assist in volunteer recruitment, screening, and matching to youth programs.
- Learn from other community groups and models. See Points of Light Foundation and The National Mentoring Partnership materials for more information.

4. Start Soon.

- Youth grow up fast! The skills and strengths your members can provide are especially crucial in early adolescence. This is the time when young people explore and develop their interests, friendships, and identities. It is also the time when **they are** most likely to start using drugs.
- The sooner you get involved, the sooner you can make a difference.

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RESOURCES

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, a service of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, offers a toll-free hotline for anyone interested in volunteering and mentoring. If you want phone numbers of local organizations, suggestions for activities you can share with youth, resource guides for volunteering programs, or advice on how to get involved, please don't hesitate to call **1-800-729-6686—se habla español.**

TDD 1-800-487-4889

<http://www.health.org>

Resource Organizations

The Points of Light Foundation

National Headquarters
1737 H Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20006
202-223-9186

National Association of Partners in Education

901 North Pitt Street, Suite 320
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-836-4880

The National Mentoring Partnership

2801 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20007
202-338-3844

Further Resources for Membership-Based Groups

A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in Nonschool Hours. Carnegie Corporation of New York. \$13.00. Phone 202-429-7979.

Developing a Corporate Volunteer Program—Guidelines for Success. The Points of Light Foundation. Order #106; \$25.00 plus \$4.50 shipping and handling. Catalog Services, P.O. Box 79110, Baltimore, MD 21279-0110. Phone 800-272-8306.

Mentoring: An Overview of Workplace Programs. The National Mentoring Partnership. Free. 2801 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20007. Phone 202-336-3844.

Organizing Effective School-based Mentoring Programs. National Association of Partners in Education. \$35.00 plus \$7.50 for shipping and handling. 901 North Pitt Street, Suite 320, Alexandria, VA 22314. Phone 703-836-4880; fax 703-836-6941.

Great Ideas! Award-Winning Strategic Community Relations Programs. Joe Williams Communications, Inc. \$89.00 (Oklahoma residents add 8% sales tax). 300 S.E. Fourth Street, P.O. Box 924, Bartlesville, OK 74005. Phone 800-833-5946; fax 918-336-2733.

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Get Involved In Someone's Future

A Guide to Volunteering
With Young People

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

Things were not looking good for Frank. Due to family, drug, and behavioral problems, he'd drifted into an alternative school for troubled youth. Despite special classes and workshops, Frank's principal still considered him "the worst kid of the whole lot."

But Elizabeth Muir, the program coordinator at the Freeport Youth Outreach Center, refused to give up on Frank. She matched him with a mentor, Dr. Lawrence Brennan, who found Frank an after-school job. More importantly, Dr. Brennan promised to meet with Frank for a few hours every week, just to talk and relax. During their chats, as a friend and confidant, Dr. Brennan became "Larry" to Frank.

The results were immediate and powerful. Within one semester, Frank switched from the alternative school to a regular junior high school and became an honor roll student. Remarkably, he has never missed a class, meeting, or day of work since. Frank also speaks to the Chamber of Commerce and other civic groups about youth outreach programs.

"All he needed was to be given some purpose and direction," says Larry. Now Frank is responsible, **focused**, a model for fellow teenagers—all because an adult took the time to make a connection, to help Frank supervise and structure his time, and to guide him as he reshaped his world.

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Guide will help caring adults see the importance of
volunteering and will show them how to get involved in positive
activities for young people.

Making a World of Difference

A World Apart. Changes over the years in family structures and neighborhood networks have increased the amount of time that many young people spend unsupervised. Today's youth are growing up faster than ever. At school, at home, in front of televisions and in their neighborhoods, adolescents are facing pressures and risks never before imagined. And in ever-increasing numbers, they are facing them alone. At the same time, these children often confront mixed messages from the media and pressure from some of their peers to use alcohol, cigarettes, and illicit drugs at younger and younger ages.



BRIDGING THE GAP

Marisol was sure of one thing. She knew she wanted to go to college and get a job. But her English was weak, she wasn't sure what careers might interest her, and she didn't see how she was going to get into college.

Then Career Beginnings, a national school-to-work community effort, matched Marisol with Julie, an executive secretary at Aetna Life and Casualty. Julie and Marisol immediately developed a bond "almost like sisters." Within a year Marisol had improved her English, strengthened her academic skills, developed personal confidence, and started college. Now that she's a teacher-certified child-life assistant at Hartford Hospital, Marisol says her success is due in large part to her participation in Career Beginnings.

When fun, challenging, and structured activities—positive activities—are in place, however, young people have somewhere to go and something

to do. Adult volunteers and positive-minded peers show youth constructive and healthy ways to enjoy their free time. They learn self-discipline, confidence, and skills that last a lifetime, and studies show these young people are much less likely to use drugs or alcohol.

A World of Difference.

Early adolescence is the most vulnerable age for youth to begin substance abuse and

related high-risk behaviors. It is also the perfect time for caring adults to get involved—the perfect time to make a world of difference.

The problems of adolescence deal with deep and moving human experiences...The tortuous passage from childhood to adulthood requires our highest attention, our understanding, and a new level of thoughtful commitment."

*David A. Hamburg,
President, Carnegie
Corporation of New York*

What You Can Do

The Positive Activities Campaign.

What today's young people want and need are fun, challenging ways to spend their free time with their peers and with adults. That is why the Secretary of Health and Human Services launched the Positive Activities Campaign: to encourage adults like you to act as role models, and to steer young people into structured, positive activities. Around the country, caring adults are coaching teams, recruiting interns, organizing civic or cultural programs, and mentoring individual young people—all positive, structured, skill-building activities that encourage, entertain, and inspire.

PONY BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

The PONY program is designed to "Protect Our Nation's Youth" by creating community leagues of organized baseball and softball for both male and female players, ages 5 to 18. Thanks to their positive relationships with adult coaches, as well as their exposure to both victory and defeat, young people learn honesty, loyalty, sportsmanship, and other values that help them grow into finer, stronger, and happier adults.

Drug Education Does Not Work Alone. Young people are tired of being lectured about drugs. Children want someone to care about them, listen to them, and teach them.

Be a Friend—Be a Volunteer. On their own and as part of ongoing efforts to support the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, which declared the need for more caring adult involvement in the lives of youth, responsible adults like you are protecting children from drug abuse by getting them involved in positive activities. By volunteering just a few hours of your time—once a week, once a month, whatever you can spare—you can have an enormous influence on a child. You could lead young people in sports, job fairs, art projects, community clean-ups—you name it. Or you could be a child's mentor, the guide and role model he or she needs. Young people want your help; all you have to do is reach out to them.

What will you get in return?

- ❖ The thrill of helping a child succeed.
- ❖ The joy of sharing your own interests with others.
- ❖ The satisfaction of making your own community safer and healthier by keeping kids off drugs.

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Ways You Can Volunteer

Sharing Your Interests. Volunteering is a chance to participate in pastimes you already enjoy alongside young people who like them too. Your hobbies, your occupations, and your dreams can all be shared with a child who is eager to share the challenge and the fun.

What Do You Want To Do? Any interesting, structured, fun activity can help a child keep away from drugs and avoid risky behavior. You will be building skills, giving a child something to look forward to, and encouraging responsibility. Consider a few suggestions:

- ❖ *Sports and Recreation.* Nearly every community needs more Little League coaches and swimming instructors. But you can also build on your expertise in other areas, such as combining basketball with counseling, like New York's Hoop Brothers, or teaching young people to water ski, as in Madison's Project Courage. Consider programs in aerobics, football, karate, chess, or cooking. If it is an activity that children already like, then they will be thrilled to do it with you.
- ❖ *Arts and Culture.* Children love to look and hear, and they love to express their own creativity. You can help by getting involved in museum tours, mural paintings, storytelling and library reading programs, ethnic dance classes, cultural awareness programs, and more. Share what you enjoy, and children will enjoy it too.
- ❖ *Work.* Volunteering through the workplace can mean building a better future workforce through internships, job shadowing, even part-time employment. It can also mean business training through Junior Achievement, personal guidance by the National Association of



Female Executives' Esteem Team, or mentoring young people across the country via e-mail.

• *Community and Environment.*

Young people want to be a part of something and see that their efforts make a difference. Help them participate in their own community by cleaning up their neighborhood, beautifying their parks, planting flowers, painting fire hydrants—whatever makes them proud of where they live.

♦ *Youth and Faith*

Organizations. You can play a major role in children's lives through a local youth group, such as a Scout troop or Boys and Girls Club. Or you can volunteer in your faith community by tutoring, counseling, leading a retreat, assisting a minister, rabbi, etc.—they are all activities that show young people you care about their lives.

UNITED NATIONAL INDIAN TRIBAL YOUTH

The UNITY project fosters spiritual, mental, physical, and social development of American Indian and Alaskan Native youth. Adult advisors and various Native American tribal representatives guide young Native Americans ages 15 to 24 as they learn about leadership and about their tribal values and heritage. Year-round activities include seminars and training programs. The Andy Payne Foot Races and the National UNITY Conference are examples of summer programs.



YOUR TIME—THEIR FUTURE

Can a caring adult's time really make a difference in the life of a young person? Recent research demonstrates that the involvement of a reliable adult helps youth develop life skills, build self-confidence, and resist pressure to begin using drugs. One recent study involved **Big Brothers and Big Sisters** meeting with their **Little Brothers and Little Sisters** regularly for at least a year. These youth, compared to other children, were:

- ◆ 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs.
- ◆ 27% less likely to begin using alcohol.
- ◆ 52% less likely to skip school.
- ◆ More confident of their performance in school work.
- ◆ Less likely to hit someone.
- ◆ More likely to get along with their families.

Many other studies consistently report the important role concerned adults can play in helping young people fulfill their potential. Beyond drug prevention, these **relationships** have been shown to provide young people with:

- ◆ Positive perceptions of their options in life.
- ◆ Better chances for future stable employment.
- ◆ Improved academic performance, often leading to college.



CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

The Positive Activities Campaign is a call to action for all Americans to participate in the lives of our young people and keep them drug free. The following campaign resources are helping to raise public awareness about the value of positive activities to youth and showing how everyone can get involved.

Public Awareness Materials

Spreading the Positive Activities message through TV, radio, and print PSAs; posters, stickers, and buttons; camera-ready art for billboards, bus cards, buttons, etc; web page at <http://www.health.org>.

Get Involved in Someone's Future:

A Guide to Volunteering with Young People

This guide helps caring adults see the importance of volunteering and shows how to get involved in positive activities with young people.

Your Time, Their Future:

Positive Activities Promote a Productive Workforce

This guide shows how positive activities are a powerful way to improve the lives of our Nation's youth and outlines how both business executives and employees can help.

Your Time, Their Future:

Membership-Based Groups Provide Positive Activities

This guide encourages organizations with a membership base to get involved in providing positive activities to youth.

Positive Activities "How To" Fact Sheets

These "one-page, one-topic, one-minute" fact sheets cover a range of topics, such as volunteer recruitment, substance abuse and youth, and youth volunteerism in positive activities.

Positive Activities Resource Guide

This guide provides a wealth of materials, information, and contacts on volunteerism, mentoring, and the Positive Activities Campaign. Included are an overview of the research and principles behind the campaign, information on diverse positive activities programs, a catalog of hundreds of volunteerism resources, how-to materials on developing mentoring programs, and much more.

Get involved! To obtain copies of any of these materials, or for related information on volunteering, mentoring, and youth substance abuse prevention, please call the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, a service of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, at 1-800-729-6686—*se habla español*. TDD 1-800-487-4889. <http://www.health.org>

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How Do I Make Use of My Company's Resources To Reach More Youth?

1. Learn From Other Organizations.

- Learn from other corporate and business leaders, as well as from groups in your community that have mentoring programs.

programs that could benefit from an extra boost through a partnership with your company, such as SADD, Key Club, etc.

- Lend professional expertise and provide in-kind resources to support existing initiatives with a mentoring and positive activities focus.

2. Use Existing Resources.

- Involve youth in planning your positive activities.
- Work with your local Volunteer Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters agency, or The National Mentoring Partnership affiliate to assist in volunteer recruitment, screening, and matching to youth programs.
- See resources listed at the end of this brochure.

Adapt their best practices to meet your organization's business and community goals.

- Look for gaps in current efforts targeted to youth, then create positive activities to fill the void.
- Identify existing student/youth-run community service campaigns or school

3. Convey a Sense of Urgency and Ownership.

- Make a commitment at the CEO level.
- Get management, employees, and retirees involved. Invite your

employees, customers, shareholders, and vendors to contribute or create creative solutions for reaching more youth.

- Put someone in charge with direct accountability to the CEO. Choose a person who:
 - ◆ has the time and motivation to succeed;
 - ◆ shows leadership potential, perhaps from middle-management ranks; and
 - ◆ sees how overall company goals will benefit from investing in youth (someone who could work closely with community relations or philanthropy staff).
- Build on your existing corporate community activities.
- Communicate outreach and volunteerism efforts as related to your strategic and business interests.
- Commit adequate resources to accomplish your goals. Be up-front about time investment and constraints.
- Define success. Decide how you will benchmark and evaluate results.

4. Start Soon.

- Youth grow up fast!

The skills and strengths your employees can provide are especially crucial in early adolescence. This is the time when young people are beginning to explore and develop their interests, friendships, and identities. It is also the time when they are most likely to start using drugs.

- Today's youth and young adults will be entering your workforce in the near future. The sooner you get involved, the sooner you can make a difference.

Making a
Difference

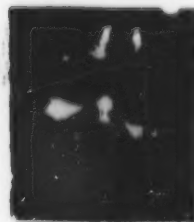
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

As a partner in Connect America—a national volunteer initiative—and in cooperation with the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, over 10,000 VFW posts will be **connected** to mentor organizations for access to VFW volunteers and possible use of post buildings for meetings. VFW posts will also **recruit** young people and their parents to volunteer at VA medical centers and state-sponsored veterans' homes with VFW members acting as mentors to youth.

MEMBER

Mentor or volunteer to connect youth with caring adults.

- As a parent or family member, plan regular social and community service activities to share with your children, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren, and encourage each child to invite a friend.
- Volunteer to become a sports coach, scout leader, youth congregation assistant, or pre-school or teacher's aide.
- Become a tutor or mentor.
- Ask your teenage or young adult children to help tutor or mentor in an elementary-aged youth program sponsored by your group.
- Invite youth to shadow your club's hobby or skills workshop for a day.



B'nai B'rith will train 5,000 of their youth members as volunteers for the **America Reads** program, as part of their **commitment** to the Presidents' Summit for America's Future.

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Zeta Phi Beta, Sigma Gamma Rho, Alpha Kappa Alpha, and Delta Sigma Theta partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' **Girl Power!** campaign. These four traditionally African-American sororities have implemented mentoring by members in their undergraduate chapters.

- Volunteer on a homework hotline.
- Provide storytelling and reading hours to children in shelters, libraries, hospitals, pre-school, or Head Start programs.
- Coordinate play or activity groups for children in after school programs, daycare centers, or family shelters.
- Organize "family and youth" nights at your lodge or branch unit.
- See the Positive Activities Campaign *Guide to Volunteering with Young People* for more ideas.

How Do I Make the Best Use of My Organization's Resources To Reach More Youth?

1. Learn from Other Organizations.

- Adapt other groups' best practices to meet your organization's mission and community goals.
- Look for gaps in current efforts targeted to youth, then create positive activities to fill the void.
- Identify existing student/youth-run community service campaigns or school programs that could benefit from an extra boost through a partnership with your members, such as SADD or Key Club.
- Lend professional expertise and provide in-kind resources to support existing initiatives with a mentoring and positive activities focus.

Employee volunteers at Hewlett Packard (HP) have been matched to three thousand students nationally through the HP E-Mail Mentoring Program. This program focuses on increasing children's **learning** while preparing them for college and careers. Via the Internet, mentors share their experience with students while teaching them improved study habits and encouraging them to **Succeed**.



HOW TO GET STARTED

- ◆ Think about how you would like to work with a young person—the types of activities that might interest you, the age and number of youth you want to work with, and the amount of **time** you have. Be prepared to discuss this with an organization's volunteer coordinator.

- ◆ Think about organizations in your community that might have mentoring opportunities that match your **interests**—volunteer centers, youth service organizations, and other associations that serve children.

If you are not sure where to start, call 1-800-729-6686 for referral to organizations in your community. Learn about at least three organizations. Discuss with their volunteer coordinators what mentoring **opportunities** they have available and how you would like to be involved.

- ◆ Be **persistent**—and do not get discouraged. It may take a while to be matched with a child, and sometimes the match may not be all you expected. Let the organization know your concerns and seek referrals to other organizations, if necessary. Becoming a mentor isn't always easy, but the rewards are well worth the effort!

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Questions You May Have

Why should I get involved?

Young people need positive, successful adult role models who will help them set and achieve their goals and stay away from drugs. Parents and teachers are key to young people's development, but sometimes extra support is needed.

Do positive activities really work?

Yes. When young people are involved in skill-building and interesting programs during non-school hours, they are less likely to start drinking or doing drugs, less likely to skip school, and far more likely to graduate from high school and go on to college. In one Illinois community, for example, one out of two students commonly dropped out of high school. However, for the youth who had mentors from a local program, the dropout rate fell to one out of twenty.

YOUTH SERVICING SENIORS

"Youth Servicing Seniors," a community service project of St. Joseph's Home for Children, provides Minneapolis youth a chance to give back to their community—and gives neighborhood seniors a chance to share their friendship and history in return. In this year-round program, young people ages 10–17 help out seniors over 70 by removing snow from driveways in winter, mowing lawns in the summer and spring, and by performing other work that helps seniors stay in their homes. Intergenerational activities such as storytelling sessions, ice cream socials, and videotaping sessions develop young people's communications skills, competence, and sense of history.



WORKING WITH YOUTH

- ◆ It is important to be consistent and to keep any **promises** you make to a child. Part of what makes you important in a young person's life is being a person they can count on and your consistency in maintaining regular contact.
- ◆ Always be honest and be clear about your expectations. Trust and respect are the key to good relationships with young people.
- ◆ Be prepared to just listen and learn, and respect a youth's confidentiality. Enjoy your new friend.

How much time will I need?

That depends on how you plan to volunteer. Maybe you will read to 8-year-olds for one lunch hour a week. Maybe you will hire an intern for three hours a day. Figure out how much time you have available, then decide what works best in your schedule.

How will the children benefit?

They will have someone to look up to. They will have a place to go in their free time. They will have something fun to do that will keep them away from destructive influences. And they will have the encouragement and guidance that comes from adults like you.

How will I benefit?

You will have the satisfaction of helping a child succeed, which may be the greatest satisfaction of all. You'll have the pleasure of sharing your own interests with eager young people. And you'll have a chance to teach the next generation—and learn from them in return.

Where do I go? Who do I call?

There are many programs and organizations you can get involved in, including many you may not know about. Start by calling 1-800-729-6686 for helpful information and resources.

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Your Turn

Make a Difference. You too can help a child stay on the right track. You can reach out to young people in your community, the ones who may seem disaffected, undirected, or lost. If you show children that you respect them enough to share your interests with them, you can help transform their lives. You can prove to them that they matter, that their futures matter, that their lives are too important to be wasted doing nothing—or doing drugs. Get started today, and make a difference tomorrow.

**“Although there is no substitute
for a deeply caring par-
ent, young people can still
thrive if some responsible
person or group steps in to
meet their needs.”**

*Great Transitions:
Preparing Adolescents for a New Century,
Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1996.*

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The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, a service of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, offers a toll-free hotline for anyone interested in volunteering and mentoring. If you want phone numbers of local organizations, suggestions for activities you can share with kids, resource guides for volunteering programs, or advice on how to get involved, please don't hesitate to call.

1-800-729-6686—se habla español

TDD 1-800-487-4889

Web site: www.health.org

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How To Be a Mentor

What Is a Mentor? A mentor is a responsible adult who provides a child with support, advice, friendship, reinforcement, and constructive example to support the efforts of parents. Mentors are people who care, people who listen, people who want to help young people bring out the strengths they already have.

Mentoring Works. Time and again, mentoring programs have made a major impact on the lives of children and adolescents. Teenagers who meet regularly with their mentors are less likely to skip school or drop out, less likely to use drugs and alcohol, and less likely to get lost in a complex and scary world.

Mentoring Programs. Across the country, communities and companies are developing successful mentoring programs in a variety of forms, including:

❖ *Individual Mentoring.* Big

Brothers Big Sisters of America matches more than 105,000 young people with mentors through its 500-plus local agencies. Founded in 1904, their mentoring program now includes one-on-one mentoring and prevention programs for children and their families in such areas as substance abuse and teen pregnancy.

❖ *Team Mentoring.* The

TeamWorks program matches groups of Los Angeles middle school students with teams of three adults: a teacher or administrator from their school, a college student, and a community or business volunteer. The team-oriented program gives

Three thousand African-American boys in Dade County, Florida, are gaining life skills, academic inspiration, and social education through the 500 Role Models of Excellence Project. The young people are matched with successful adult volunteers, who meet with them regularly to provide advice and guidance. Now the Project is expanding to include job and skills training, family counseling, and an apprenticeship program.

the students an alternative to the streets, as well as a chance to participate with their mentors in leadership training, field trips, volunteer community service, and ongoing team and one-on-one mentoring.

❖ *Faith-Based Mentoring.* The religious institutions of the Philadelphia Church Mentoring Network (a service of One to One Philadelphia and the United Way Volunteer Center of Southeastern Pennsylvania) supplement the work of parents, teachers, and counselors through various mentoring opportunities. Congregation volunteers build caring and compassionate friendships with young people, reinforcing their positive self-images, broadening their exposure to career options, and equipping them with the tools to resist the negative influences that lead to drug abuse and other social ills.

❖ *Workplace Mentoring.* Through the Hospital Youth Mentoring Program (supported by The Commonwealth Fund and managed by The Johns Hopkins Hospital), 750 students throughout the country intern at fifteen urban hospitals and meet weekly with mentors, most of whom are high-level doctors and administrators. Every week, students work in four teams and rotate through the hospitals' departments, learning aspects of patient care and making presentations to other students. Moreover, the students meet with their mentors for an hour each week to discuss what they've learned and get advice on academics, careers, and life options.

Your Time—Their Future. Mentoring does take time and effort. Some young people, and some programs, need more time than others, and you must be realistic about how much time in a day, week, or month you can devote to mentoring. But remember, mentoring doesn't have to be a lifetime commitment. Sometimes a little help can go a long way.

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